

New England Waters Support Many Uses... But Aquatic Life & Fish Consumption Are Limited

States assess waters based on both monitoring data and professional evaluation.

Generally, about 33% of our river/stream miles, 67% of lake/pond acreage and 37% of estuarine square miles are monitored for various conditions. Biological monitoring programs, however, are not fully developed in most states, so only 11% of our rivers and streams are monitored for aquatic life use support. Therefore, EPA and state agencies are working to expand the number of waters monitored for biological communities and habitat. State-wide advisories restricting consumption of certain fish species, due to mercury levels, will continue to affect the use support status of our waters, particularly lakes.

Figure 12. Impaired New England Waters

Designated Use (Measure of Impairment)	River/Stream Miles	Lake/Pond Acres	Estuarine Sq. Miles
Fish Consumption (Advisories)	34%	100%	1%
Shellfishing (Closures/Restrictions)	N/A	N/A	23%
Swimming (Beach Closures)	3%	17%	4%
Aquatic Life (Unhealthy Biological Communities)	11%	21%	10%

source: 1996 State 305(b) Reports and Fish Advisories